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COMPTON, ORAH T.
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES,
WARREN BETHEL AND MARY J.
COMPTON

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Biographical Sketches



Warren Bethel
and
Mary J. Compton

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WARREN BETHEL COMPTON, farmer and pioneer settler, was born near Cedar Grove in Orange county, N. C., on April 25, 1848, and died following an attack of influenza at Hanson, Ky., on Thursday, March 23, 1922. He was buried at the family burying ground seven miles west of Hanson on Saturday, March 25th, surrounded by loving friends. He is survived by the wife, Mary J. Compton, two years his senior, and six children, Alice N., Louis W., Wattie F., and Artie C., all in or near Hanson, and Mrs. Jodie Day, of Madisonville, Ky., and Orah T., of Dallas, Texas. Two children, Jas. and Nettie, are dead.

Father was next to the youngest in a family of eleven children, six brothers and four sisters. One brother and two sisters survive, still living near the place of their birth in North Carolina. In the year 1867 he emigrated to Kentucky and settled in Hopkins county, a few miles west of Hanson. It was there he met one that was destined to later form an important part in his life and work, Mary J. Veazey, who together with her parents, Louis and Elizabeth Veazey, two sisters and three brothers, had emigrated to Kentucky from an adjoining county in North Carolina, about one year previous. They were married on May 7, 1868. On May 7, 1918, they celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary and were the happy recipients of many tokens and expressions of friendship.

In the unhappy conflict of 1861-65 between the North and the South, the people of many of the Southern States were sorely tried, many of their men having been killed in battle and their farms and factories laid waste. After peace was declared, many from those states along the Atlantic Coast set out to more fertile fields to the North and West. It was under conditions such as these that the subject of this sketch came to Kentucky and settled in a part that was then almost a vast wilderness. The song of the cardinal, the reverberating sound of the woodman's ax and the crack of the huntsman's rifle made music for the sparsely settled dwellers of the land by day and the bark of the fox hound, the howl of the wolf and the hoot of the owl struck terror to the hearts of the denizens of the forest by night. But alas! the giant oaks, poplar, walnut and pines of the forest are no more. The antelope, deer and wild turkey are relics of the past and with their passing has gone also almost the last one, from the fading ranks of the pioneer settlers, who in line with their progenitors have carried unblemished through the vicissitudes of centuries, the residue of the Anglo Saxon race, whose descendants settled in America early in the seventeenth century.

W. B. Compton was known, loved and respected as a plain, blunt, good man. He did not aspire to fame or greatness. He fought no battles except the battles of peace and hard work. He delivered no orations nor preached any sermons, save and except the gospel that comes through the example of right living. He believed in the majesty of the law and the rule of the majorities, having little patience with the recrudescence of Klu Kluxism and other forms of intolerance and lawlessness that are shaking the very foundation on which our civilization is founded. In his criticisms of those having done some wrong he was charitable, seeking to excuse, rather than

to magnify their short comings. He was a lover of justice and a friend of the oppressed. He never turned anyone from his door cold or hungry and it can be truly said of him, "Should everyone to whom he did some kind and loving service bring a blossom to his grave he would sleep beneath a wilderness of flowers".

To his friends and loved ones, it is a consoling thought to know that he died as he had lived, in the strength of Noble Manhood and the hope of the Christian's faith. We sat by his bedside when he realized that the end of his journey was near and saw his bright countenance lit by God's sunshine when he tried to utter reassuring words to that gentle wife and mother, who had walked down life's pathway with him, hand in hand, for over fifty-four years. In the travail of my soul I thought of and was comforted by the words of the beloved Apostle, which he so much liked to read, 2 Tim. 4:6, 7, 8, "For I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only but unto all them that love his appearing".

Is there aught more that I should say? We can not add to or detract from his glory. It is for us, the living, rather than the dead, to dedicate and to reconsecrate our lives to the work that he and others gone before have left us to do, so that when the crunch of the hearse is heard in front of our place and comes the smell of flowers, they can make the music sweet and the epitaph short and plain and say of us as it is said of him, "There lies a man". Nay; that is not all; the grave is not our goal. If we follow in His steps, love shall light the way into life eternal.

—O. T. COMPTON, 208 Andrews Bldg., Dallas, Texas.

Brother Compton was a member of Tirza Primitive Baptist Church and had been for many years. He was a man of great influence for good among all who knew him. We have been his humble pastor for five years and we feel that we have sustained a great loss. May the dear Lord bless the bereaved family and by His grace enable them to meet father and husband in glory. We preached his funeral at Antioch Primitive Baptist Church in the presence of a large crowd of sorrowing relatives and friends.

—J. D. SHAIN.

Mary J. Compton, the subject of this sketch, was born in Granville County, N. C., on January 6, 1846, and died at her home in Hansen, Ky., on September 16, 1922, of paralysis, having been an invalid for about two years prior to her death. She was buried at the family burying ground, near Father, whose departure had preceded hers just six months to the day.

Funeral services were conducted at the grave by Rev. L. M. Winstead of the Missionary Baptist Church, of which she had been almost a life-long member. She is survived by those children living at the time of Father's death and one sister, Elizabeth Veazey, widow of George C. Veazey, whose wedding was solemnized on the same day, May 7, 1868, as was Father's and Mother's.

As indicated in the foregoing, during the last few years of her life, Mother suffered much bodily pain; but her spirit was undaunted and the light of her great love shone on with a radiance that was sublime. Like Father, she possessed that magnanimity of soul that could condone the bad and magnify the good in others. No matter what the offense, that great mother heart was always ready to forgive and comfort you with the richness of her love. She was never too busy nor too tired to administer with loving hands to the needs and wants of those about her, as only a mother can. It can truly be said that she gave herself as a living sacrifice for others; and John says, "Greater love hath no man than this. That a man lay down his life for his friends". John 15:1-3.

During Father's last illness, Mother, who occupied a bed in an adjoining room, would quite frequently have Sisters, Alice and Bettie, and Brother Artie and others carry her in to see him, who on the occasion just a few days before his death seems to have spoken with prophetic vision, when he told her not to worry, that all was well, that in a very short time they would meet again in the place where parting will be no more. And who can say that God in His infinite mercy and goodness will not again, in some way, link together those beautiful lives, so that together they can walk hand in hand down the ages.

Mythology among other things possesses some wonderful stories expressing great moral truths; but none more so than one pertaining to mother love. It is related that an Angel came from Heaven to gather mementos of the most beautiful thing of earth's possession and that in wending his way from place to place he saw the mighty ocean, the rivers and the water, leaping with majestic splendor over the beautiful falls and precipices of nature. He saw the hills and the mountains and the winding streams of field and forest. He saw the meadow rich with clover; the garden of flowers and the birds. He listened to the song of the cardinal and the sweet music that came from the throat of the nightingale and was enraptured with the grandeur and majesty of it all. But going a short distance into the forest he discovered for his first time an American Beauty Rose and exclaimed, Eureka! Eureka! I have found it; I will take this to my father as a memento of the most beautiful thing in all of earth's possessions. On his arrival, his father told him that he would have to try again, that he had not yet found the most beautiful thing. So the Angel descended again into earth, close by the place from whence he had plucked the rose and there in its cradle was a little baby girl, with her golden tresses, in flowing ringlets as the breeze wafted them to and fro; and the Angel said surely there could be nothing more beautiful than this. I will take the baby to my Heavenly Father and surely he will see that there could be nothing more beautiful; but the father told him that while the babe was indeed beautiful, nevertheless it was not the most beautiful, and for him to return again to earth with the babe and place it in its cradle and there to linger for a glimpse of the most sacred and the most beautiful thing in all the earth. Immediately the little one was returned he saw bending low the form of the heart stricken mother pouring out her love for her child again in the cradle. Ascending immediately to heaven

the Angel exclaimed, "I know now what is the most beautiful thing in all the earth! It is the mother's love for her child".

I count it among the greatest treasures of my life to have had the love and the confidence of a noble mother. God pity the child that is denied or deprived of the richest of all earthly blessings, the love, care and affection of a kind and gentle mother.

To those who perchance may hear or read this tribute of respect of a son to the memory of his dear father and mother, let me impress first on the hearts of the children whose parents are still living, be good, kind and true to father and mother, for they are the best friends you will ever know, and to the fathers and the mothers as well as to the children, please don't forget that the responsibility of leadership of fatherhood and of motherhood calls for sacrifice and service and that "He who serves best profits most", for it is in that same measure that you give, that it shall be measured back to you.

"There are loyal hearts; there are spirits brave.
There are souls that are pure and true.
Then give to the world the best you have;
And the best will come back to you.

Give love and love to your heart will flow;
A strength in your utmost need;
Have faith, and a score of hearts will show,
Their faith in your word and deed.

For life is the mirror of king and slave;
'Tis just what you are and do,
Then give to the world the best you have
And the best will come back to you".

—(Bridges).
O. T. C.



Two lovely flowers, in a garden grew,
 Warmed by the sunshine, watered by the dew;
They dropped at eve'n tide as the light grew dim,
 But shall bloom again, fore'er, happy with Him.

—O.T.C.

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